



Symbols of our past and present

The wheel in the college's crest signifies a number of things, including the Conestoga wagon.

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SPOKE

A learning newsroom for journalism students

Walk Safe hiring

Staff needed to escort people to their cars and even the rez.

NEWS 2

Helping Dany

Fundraiser tomorrow will benefit student who needs bone marrow transplant.

NEWS 3

Monday, November 26, 2007

Conestoga College, Kitchener, Ont.

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39th Year — No. 26

Students are best of best

By AARON O'CONNELL

Three architecture students at Conestoga College have won International Facility Management Association scholarships for the second year in a row.

The student chapter president of Conestoga's IFMA, Jonathan Douglas of St. Pauls, Ont. along with Amanda Ford and Samantha Janson, both of Cambridge, have put Conestoga on the map once again thanks to their excellent academic achievements and program involvement.

The three students are currently enrolled in project and facility management, a four-year degree program in architecture, and have earned the prominent awards which are traditionally won by students coming from highly regarded schools such as Georgia Tech, Pennsylvania and Texas A&M, to name a few.

"Last year we took four of the top five awards," Douglas said. "This year we grabbed three of the top five and we are the first Canadian school to do that."

Douglas, who is a graduate of Stratford's Northwestern Secondary School, won the corporate headquarters council honour last year and a scholarship from the IFMA Philadelphia Chapter this year. He said the degree program has widened his opportunities.

"Because the program is more industry-based, it gives you a lot of opportunities and you get to explore a lot of different things other than facility management."

Jansen, who won an IFMA scholarship sponsored by the Corporate Facilities Council this year and the IFMA scholarship from the Philadelphia Chapter last year, said she's always been committed to the program, even though she came to Conestoga

intending to become an architect.

"I actually got into it by accident," the Jacob Hespeler Secondary School graduate said. "I had originally picked the diploma program to become an architect, but a teacher told me about the degree program and I said, 'Why not.'"

Jansen said she worked extremely hard to win the awards.

"I've just had a diverse contribution to the program and got involved in different extracurricular activities to better my resume," she said.

Amanda Ford has won the same award, which is sponsored by IFMA's Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex Chapter, twice in a row. She believes that Conestoga is one of the top schools offering the facility management program.

"I believe these awards will prove that Conestoga College has one of the top programs in both the United States and Canada for the teaching of facility and project management," Ford said.

"In the past three years Conestoga College has proven that the United States is not the only country to provide extraordinary students in these industries, but Conestoga has taken leadership in providing equally talented students."

The Southwood Secondary School graduate is currently attending Algonquin College where she is enrolled in the French as a Second Language program. However, she will return to Conestoga to continue her studies in the winter.

The IFMA has 18,500 members in 125 chapters and councils in 60 nations. Through fundraising, the IFMA foundation promotes educational and research opportunities to advance the facility management profession.



(Photo by Hien Dinh)

Making spirits bright

Aunt Dot the Clown, who has entertained at more than 5,000 events, celebrates the holiday season with Mikayla, Kenya and Shelby at a party held by Cambridge Metal Products. See Page 11 for story.

Soaring loonie hurts shops

By SARAH JAYNES

Local retailers are dealing with a lot of angry customers now that the Canadian dollar is worth more than the U.S. dollar.

Salespeople are being questioned about why consumers have to pay the higher price on products that list both a Canadian and American price, and stores are losing sales.

In particular, bookstores have taken a hit because American prices are anywhere from \$5 to \$20 lower than the Canadian prices.

"This has left consumers irritated," says Ron Tracy, an employee at Chapters in Toronto.

Tracy says customers are not

very understanding and blame the salespeople.

"They don't understand that there is nothing we (the salespeople) can personally do about it," he says.

While some stores such as HMV, Wal-Mart and Zellers have dropped their prices by nearly 20 per cent, there are still many stores that have not been able to do so.

Allan Greenfield, the owner of six Hallmark Gold Crown stores in the province, says his stores are slowly making changes, but it takes time.

"Our customers have to understand that I still pay the Canadian prices on my products even though Hallmark is an American name," he says. The same goes for many

retailers across the country who are still paying the Canadian price and can't afford to lose money by lowering prices. However, they may lose in the end anyhow, due to fewer sales.

Anita Warren, a mother of two, says she has stopped shopping at certain stores because they have not lowered their prices.

Warren, along with thousands of other consumers, believes that the owner of a store should be taking the loss and that the customer shouldn't have to deal with it.

To counteract this, some stores are removing the tags that show the two prices and instead marking them with only the Canadian price.

Some students get jump on holiday shopping, others procrastinate

BY FRANCA MAIO

Christmas is just a month away; have you made your list yet?

Sometimes figuring out what you want sitting under the tree can be just as difficult as searching for the perfect gift for someone on your list.

The season is quickly approaching, and the malls are being flooded with holiday shoppers hoping to pick up that perfect gift.

Brenna Wilson, a first-year general arts student, said she has started her holiday shopping.

"I have shopped for most of my

friends and my sister," she said.

She said she is looking forward to receiving new clothing, boots and a new digital camera because she likes photography.

Some traditions celebrated during the holidays, Wilson said, are her family opening one present each on Christmas Eve and enjoying a family dinner on Christmas Day.

Brandon Drexler, a first-year civil engineering student, said he has not started his shopping yet. He admitted he is a last-minute shopper.

He said the main items he hopes are under the tree are clothing, an

iPhone and a new television for his room.

Drexler said his family usually has a family party during the holidays.

Jessica Herbert, a clerk in the college bookstore, said she is half-done her holiday shopping.

She is looking for a particular item under the tree this year, but is not sure if she will receive it.

"I am looking to get jewelry," she said. "It is the only thing on my list, because I want an engagement ring."

Herbert said her family celebrates Christmas for three days,

Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Ada Harrison, a program assistant at Conestoga College's Doon campus and a newlywed, is looking forward to spending the holidays with her family and her husband.

She said she is not expecting too much and appreciates the little things, but there is an item she hopes will be among the gifts from her husband. "A new hair straightener," she said.

Harrison said she has not started shopping yet, but she will start soon to beat the crowds at the malls.

She said she is looking forward to sharing family traditions with her husband.

"It is pretty traditional with my family because we have a Latin American background," she said. "We don't usually celebrate the 25th, it's the 24th and we stay up late, until midnight, to open gifts and we have lots of traditional foods."

Whether or not you have started to shop or have made a list of items you are looking for this season, always keep in mind that Christmas is about giving, receiving and spending time with the people you love.

Now deep thoughts ...with Conestoga College

Random questions answered by random students

What would your theme song be and why?



"Obladi Oblada by the Beatles, because life goes on no matter what."

*Lyndsey Ross,
second-year
respiratory therapy*

"This is why I'm hot by Mims, because I'm hot 'cause I'm fly."

*Rebecca Conto,
second-year early
childhood education*



"Eye of the Tiger by Survivor, because I love the movie Rocky."

*Joel Cook,
first-year business
foundations*



"Easy Like Sunday Morning by Lionel Richie - it's self-explanatory."

*Adam Fridenburg,
first-year radio
broadcasting*



"Girls Just Wanna Have Fun by Cindy Lauper, because no matter what, I just want to have fun."

*Jess Broadfoot,
first-year practical
nursing*



"Sex Bomb by Tom Jones, because it's sexy and it makes me feel sexy."

*Milton Orellana,
first-year general arts and
sciences — health option*



Smile Conestoga, you could be our next respondent!

Walk Safe short-staffed

By JENN SPRACH

Conestoga College's Walk Safe program is a little short-handed this year.

The program was designed to create a safe after-hours environment for faculty, staff and students.

They provide services such as escorting people to their car or even to the residence.

"We've had to scale down because we haven't had enough qualified applicants," said John Anderson, a college security representative, adding they have hired one extra security staff person to help out.

The program is a paid work study which is available to all students who demonstrate a financial need, said Anderson.

However, Walk Safe does provide good work experience for law and security students.

Anyone interested in applying for the Walk Safe program can drop off his or her resume and application in the security office.

All staff are trained in first aid and are responsible for providing a safe environment while interacting with the public.

They might also walk the grounds and report anything they deem suspicious, he said.

The staff work in pairs for safety reasons, said Anderson.

As well, there are 109 cameras and 16 emergency phones strategically placed around campus.

"The emergency phones are tied

in with the cameras and as soon as you pick up the phone, it rings to a phone here and the camera isolates on that location," said Anderson.

They are located in each of the parking lots and can be identified easily by the yellow reflective post.

Although there are 109 cameras on campus it hasn't deterred car thieves.

There have been approximately five incidences, said Anderson. "One instructor had his van stolen twice."

It was recovered in Peel Region the first time and the second time it was found in Brantford.

A majority of the thefts at the college have been Dodge Caravans.

"The rates at the college are no higher than the general area," said Anderson.

There have also been incidences of cars being hit with paintballs at the college.

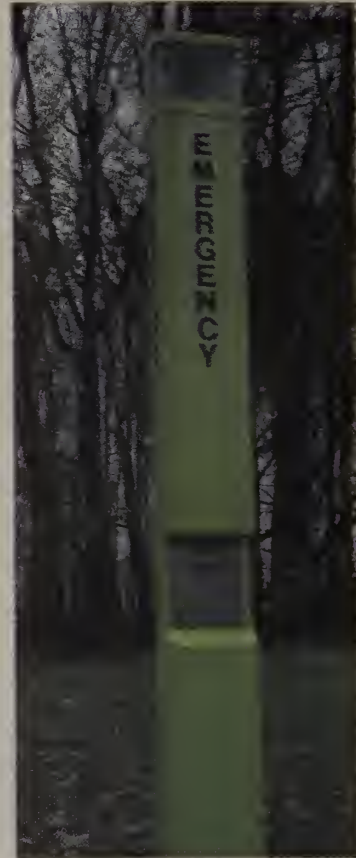
One student went into security and tried to report the incident but was brushed off by staff.

When Anderson was asked about the incident he said he couldn't comment about it because he didn't know about it.

He checked the logged reports in the computer which showed a report was never taken.

"It shouldn't have happened like that," said Anderson, adding, "It should have been investigated and followed up."

Anderson said he would look into the incident and ensure it doesn't happen again.



(Photo by Jenn Sprach)

The emergency phones on campus are wired into cameras. When the button is pushed it rings to an emergency line in the security office and the cameras focus on the phone. There are 16 emergency phones on campus.

Cambridge campus helps students brush up on academic skills

By LEANNE MOUNTFORD

Whether you want to get a post-secondary education, make a job or career change or just brush up on your academic skills, Conestoga's Cambridge campus may be able to help you move toward your goal.

Dianne Murphy, faculty member at the Cambridge campus, said the faculty help people move forward when they don't know how.

The first step is to find out what level people are at. By taking an assessment test at the campus, an individual's abilities in different subject areas are measured and then faculty at the campus recommend the best solutions to help them. For instance, if someone wants to prepare to write their general education diploma (GED) test, and they do well on the assessment, they may be recommended to just get some preparation books. However, if they are struggling with a specific subject matter or two, it may be recommended that they upgrade their skills.

There is a quick turnaround time for getting the assessments back.

Susan Garlick, co-ordinator of the preparatory program at the Cambridge campus, said she usually gets them back to people the same day or the following day.

There is no cost to complete the assessments or the programs because the programs are funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities under the

literacy and basic skills programs.

"That's the politically correct way of saying it. I don't say that to the students because they hear basic and they think basic level, but it isn't that at all, that's just the funding for us," said Garlick.

If it is recommended to individuals that they upgrade their skills, they can choose to do academic upgrading at the campus. Academic upgrading is a self-directed program, said Murphy. Students are at all different levels when they enter the program.

The students are given course outlines and they take the courses they need depending on where they are headed, said Garlick.

Some people have full-time or part-time jobs or other commitments, so they arrange when they go to the class around their schedules.

Academic upgrading is offered year-round and is continual intake, meaning people can join the program at anytime. Students can be in the program for a few weeks or a few months depending on what they're working toward.

If someone is working part-time, they may be able to devote 25 hours a week to these courses, said Garlick. Someone who is not working might be able to finish in half the time. They may be able to write the first test in two days where someone else might take two weeks.

"But, we have to be realistic, if

somebody is going on to a business program, it's not realistic to take a month or six weeks to do a math topic. It might be the wrong choice," said Garlick.

In an average year, the program has about 100 plus students in it, she said.

Academic upgrading is available for anyone including people that have their Grade 12 or higher. Sometimes a person will work at a company for 20 or 30 years and then the company shuts down and the person may want to brush up on their academic skills, said Garlick.

Two other programs that the Cambridge campus offers are employment training readiness and focus for change. These programs are based on career planning. They are both block intake courses running 25 hours a week, Monday to Friday. These two programs are teacher-driven; everyone takes the same subject and learns the same material, said Murphy.

The difference between the two programs is focus for change is only for women and the participants must be on assistance. It is a 15-week program with an added women's component, focusing on women's issues. The employment/training readiness program is 10 weeks long.

Both programs take in 17 students at a time. Focus for change starts in September and employment/training readiness starts in January and again in April.

Tomorrow is Help Dany Day

Fundraiser offers Conestoga students two ways to be part of a miracle — your money or your marrow

By **CHARLOTTE PRONG PARKHILL**

He's been battling leukemia for five years, and he needs your help now.

Conestoga student Dany Mercado, 24, is in a race to get a life-saving bone marrow transplant.

Tomorrow, Conestoga Students Inc. is teaming up with the non-profit organization, Better World Today, to raise money for Mercado's medical care and awareness about bone marrow donation.

OHIP only covers bone marrow transplants if the donor is an exact match. But Mercado can get a mismatch bone marrow transplant in Detroit, Mich. at the Karmanos Cancer Institute. In a mismatch transplant, the recipient gets bone marrow from a donor with the closest possible match.

The cost for the procedure is \$200,000.

Tuesday, Nov. 27 has been designated Help Dany Day at Conestoga. Volunteers will be stationed at all entrances to the college from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. to take donations. At 10 a.m. Kitchener firefighters will be challenging teams to pull a fire truck to generate more support through pledges for Mercado. Part of the main road through the college will be blocked off, and the fire truck pull will take place between Doors 1 and 2. A

cheque will be presented to the Dany Mercado Foundation at 12 p.m. in the Student Life Centre atrium. NASCAR Canada driver and Conestoga grad J.R. Fitzpatrick will also be on hand to promote the event. "I'll be here until the end to help Dany," he said.

Ron Giles is a Windsor man who founded the organization Better World Tomorrow to raise funds and awareness about bone marrow donation. Giles was on the registry for 10 years before he got the call to donate two years ago. His bone marrow helped save the life of a 14-year-old boy.

Giles met Mercado's parents when they came to Better World Tomorrow's Camp 4 Compassion in Leamington. "They were pleading with us to help save their son's life," said Giles.

Mercado's situation is complicated by the fact that he is of Nicaraguan descent. In an interview on Detroit's Fox News, Mercado's mother Ileana pleaded for people to register. "The most possibility to find (a match) is in the Spanish community," she said. "It's a simple test ... it won't take so much time to save my son's life."

Donors can join the National Marrow Donor Program Registry by completing a brief health questionnaire and having a swab of cheek cells taken from the inside of their mouth. The more people who

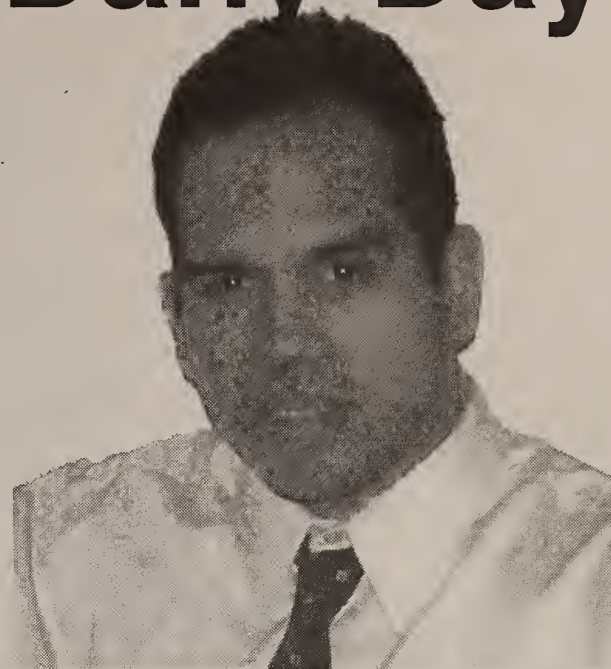
are registered with the donor program, the better chance recipients have of getting an exact match. For more information go to Canadian Blood Services at www.blood.ca.

Mercado is a student in the mechanical engineering technology, robotics and automation program, and a graduate of Grand River Collegiate Institute. He has also been a support worker for developmentally challenged people for five years. He has been at the Grand River Regional Cancer Centre since Nov. 2 to stabilize his condition.

CSI president Roxy Stanciu said Mercado is in critical condition, but rallied when he heard about the Conestoga fundraiser. "It really raised his spirits."

CSI manager Christopher Graves is amazed Help Dany Day has taken off so quickly. "It's just had a real ripple effect. International students want to help because they feel he's one of their own," he said. "Kitchener firefighters got on board because a lot of them are alumni. All the LASA students and police and firefighter foundations students want to be involved."

Mercado's father Luis said he wants Conestoga students to be part of a miracle. "It's been a very difficult journey, a painful one," he said. "And now we're in the final stages. With your help, we can save Dany's life."



(Internet photos)

Conestoga student Dany Mercado, above, needs a bone marrow transplant. With him are his mother Ileana, brother Elias and sister Stephany. Kitchener firefighters will be on hand tomorrow for a truck pull competition to help raise funds and awareness.



Tim Hortons to open in January

College council also discusses new Student Life Centre position and growing enrolment

By **CHARLOTTE PRONG PARKHILL**

Conestoga's Respect Campaign just got a boost.

Conestoga Students Inc. president Roxy Stanciu announced at the college council meeting Nov. 19 that a new Student Life Centre staff position has been created. The student life programmer will be responsible for co-ordinating student-led initiatives related to respect, diversity and civic awareness. Funding for this position will come from the priority fee, one of the ancillary fees that students pay.

"It's an all-encompassing campaign that's about respecting human rights," said Stanciu.

Carol Gregory, director of student development/student life, said the college is currently looking for a good candidate and hopes the full-time position will be filled by January. "We're hoping to increase student engagement," she said.

Stanciu also gave council an update on the other services CSI provides. The photo studio and massage therapist have been moved to new rooms across the hall in the Student Life Centre. A new spiritual meeting room is being constructed over the winter holidays and should be complete in January.

Construction continues on the

new full-service Tim Hortons located inside Door 3. It was slightly delayed and is now scheduled to open the first week of January for a trial run before students return to classes on Jan. 7.

In other business, Conestoga president John Tibbits outlined the college's strategic plan. He believes the college needs to continue to grow not just to meet the needs of students, but to meet the needs of the region. He said Conestoga is uniquely located to serve Canada's technology triangle and an existing workforce that needs a lot of additional training.

"If we want to be taken seriously in this community, we need to step up and take care of these skills shortages," said Tibbits.

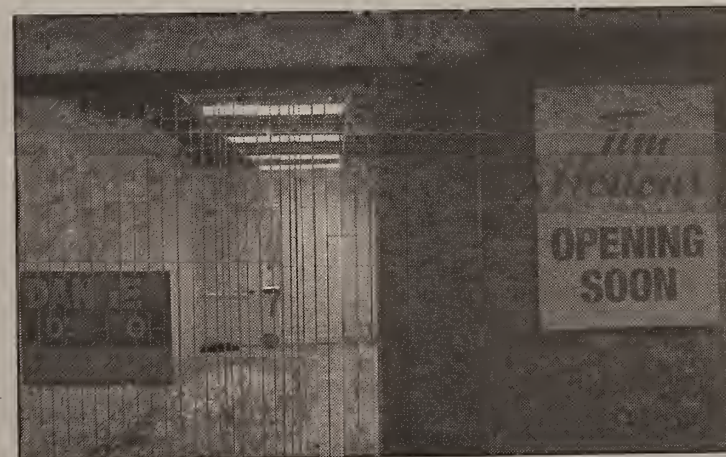
He said enrolment growth will mostly come from three areas: one-year foundations programs, degree programs and one-year post-diploma programs. "There will be a huge emphasis on growth," he said. "The goal is to move to 10,000 students in five years." With local high school enrolment forecast to drop by up to 25 per cent over the next 10 years, post-secondary institutions will need to work hard to attract students. "We have to position ourselves as a world-class polytechnic," Tibbits said. "It's going to be a real dog-fight out there."



(Photo by Hien Dinh)

The new Tim Hortons inside Door 3 is under construction and due to open the first week of January.

(Photo by Aaron O'Connell)



LASA students network with future employers

By **CHARLOTTE PRONG PARKHILL**

When you think of CSIS, do you think of international espionage?

Students in the law and security administration program had a chance to meet industry professionals from the Canadian Society of Industrial Security, also known as CSIS, at a yearly event held at Conestoga Nov. 14.

The dinner and seminar provided an opportunity for students to network with the owners and managers of various security companies.

"I tell the students, every handshake is like a job interview," said James Phillips, co-ordinator of the LASA program.

Speakers included CSIS president Kevin Murphy and Marlene Raasok, vice-president of the School of Health Sciences, Community Services and Biotechnology.

Const. Peter Barbuto presented a learning seminar about crime prevention through the use of good lighting, landscaping and fencing. Barbuto is a Conestoga graduate who has been with the Waterloo Regional Police Service for 18 years and currently works as a crime prevention officer.

The event was sponsored by security companies Highpoint, Barber-Collins and Tone-Gar.

Areas with student housing need extra vigilance

Student housing has always been a good place for college students to live because it is close to the school and a great place to meet people.

However, in some cities it is becoming a concern. Housing areas in places like London and Hamilton are becoming hotbeds for violent crimes and break-ins.

These cities need to implement procedures like the ones used in Kitchener-Waterloo to prevent these incidents and make off-campus housing a safe place to live.

Olaf Heinzl, the public affairs co-ordinator for Waterloo Regional Police Services, says the city keeps its problems to a minimum by having various groups work together.

"We work with the bylaw enforcement, campus security and the community to maintain a high quality of life and prevent situations from developing," he said.

They also run an education campaign at the beginning of each year to let the students know what is expected of them before they move in.

So far this school year it has been pretty quiet in the subdivision by the college, with only a few minor problems like noise complaints, so their efforts seem to be effective.

London's Fleming Drive area near Fanshawe College, however, has been facing a lot of problems, particularly in the early months of the school year.

During the first weekend of September a riot broke out in the area after numerous parties converged on the street. When the police arrived, they found a crowd of over 200 people smashing windows and breaking fences. Some students then began to throw beer bottles at the officers before arrests were made.

This incident was just one of many on Fleming Drive, as 808 provincial offences and 27 Criminal Code offences were handed out in September.

Students living in that area also face the threat of break and enters, as on more than one occasion students have arrived home to find their doors broken in and items such as Playstations and iPods gone.

However, Const. Amy Phillip of the London Police Service says most of the thefts happen when the resident is home.

"A lot of students have large parties and open themselves to thefts by not putting away their valuables," she said.

They do run one initiative every year, Project Liquor Enforcement and Reduction of Noise (LEARN), which started in September and ran into October for the first time because of increased need.

Project LEARN means stricter bylaw enforcement and increased fines and allows the officers to come to the area and lay charges without complaints from neighbours.

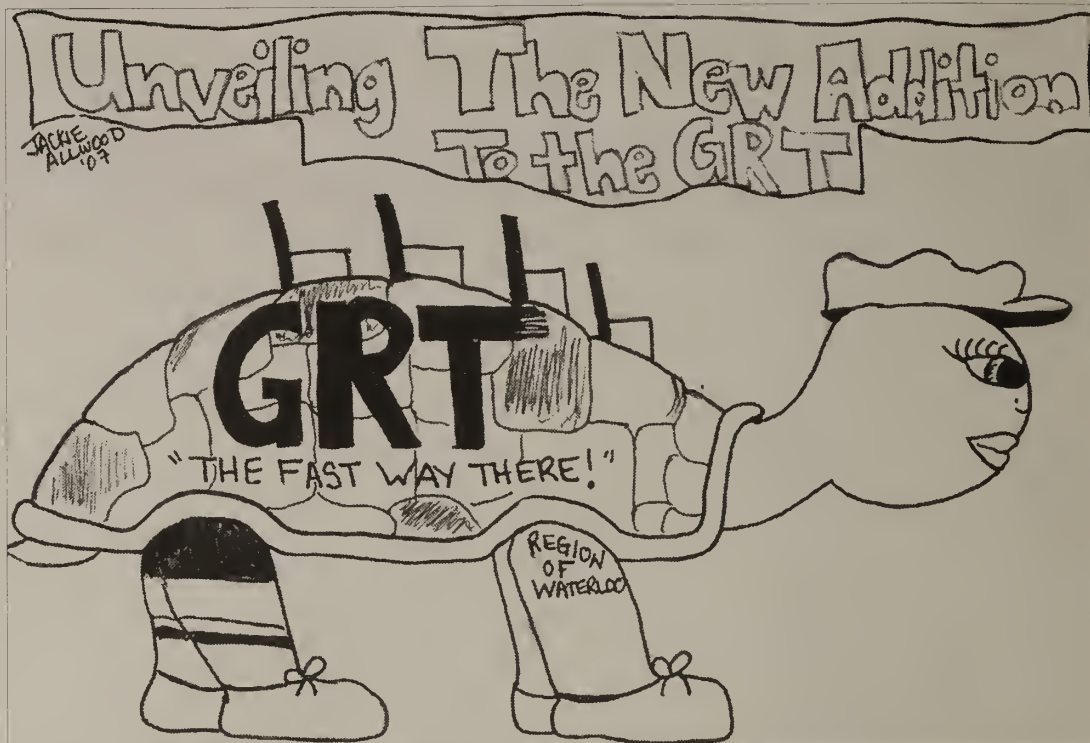
Hamilton is also experiencing a lot of drinking-related problems around their McMaster off-campus housing. On weekends, students will leave a house party or the campus pub and form a small mob, creating a very unsafe environment.

London and Hamilton need to follow the lead of Kitchener-Waterloo, and work with students and school to limit out-of-control parties and violence in the streets.

They need to ensure the off-campus students adhere to the same code of conduct as students who live in residence. If they become a public nuisance or damage property, they should be punished by the school as well as fined by the police. They also need to have a stronger police presence at all times to make sure things don't get out of control, instead of waiting for an incident before they respond.

The community as a whole must work together to make changes if arrests, serious injuries and missing and damaged property in off-campus housing become the norm.

A safe community must always be everyone's No. 1 priority.



Being late isn't that great

Every time I listen to a local radio station and hear the Grand River Transit's (GRT) advertisement, it makes me cringe.

It's not that I don't appreciate the fact there is a transit system to transport people who can't afford a vehicle or people who take it to do their part in lowering emissions to help save the planet. But if these people have appointments they need to get to on time, like getting to school for an exam, they may need to find a different method of transportation.

Since the beginning of the semester I have been riding the glorious transit system to the Doon campus from Cambridge.

However, at least one bus a day either to the school or on the way home has been late. This leaves me and many other people stuck at the bus station for at least a half an hour before they can get the next bus.

Most of the time it is just students heading home from school which isn't a big deal but sometimes there are other people who are trying to pick up their young children from day cares and school and elderly people who may need to get somewhere at a specific time and it isn't happening.

For the students who go to the Doon campus from Cambridge this



Jackie Allwood

Opinion

ends up costing more than a few minutes of tardiness; sometimes it causes us to miss important classes and sometimes exams because the Conestoga bus only runs every hour.

A company that boasts it is "the fast way there" and then has a bus late at least once a day signifies something needs to be changed.

I understand it takes more money to increase the number of buses on the roads at one time but there are other measures that can be taken to help with the slow times and the late buses.

One of the major things is making the drivers understand the schedules they are supposed to be running on and if they do not abide by these schedules discipline should be taken. Everytime there is a complaint about drivers or how late a bus is the GRT staff inside the Ainslie Street terminal hand over a phone number and tell you to call the operator.

I know drivers need breaks and tol-

erate many people all day long but when they just stop a bus in the middle of a route and get off it, it is frustrating for the riders and is just flat out rude when people are relying on them to get somewhere on time. And, drivers who insist on talking on their cellphones while driving need to be taught this isn't safe.

Driving and talking on cellphones is illegal for new car drivers so why do people who drive a ton of steel down the road think it is perfectly safe to talk on one.

I am disappointed with a transit system that is so highly regarded in the community and I pose a challenge for those people who highly praise the system.

Take your car keys and throw them behind the couch, make an important appointment in Kitchener that you cannot miss or be late for, get a bus schedule and hop on the GRT and see if you make your appointment on time.

Leaving two hours early is not an option, especially when you have to be at a class at 8 a.m. which is what the drivers recommend we do.

Thank you GRT for being there for people who like to go green and those who cannot afford vehicles but please, if you are going to say the GRT is the fast way there, prove it.

Letters are welcome



Spoke welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be signed and include the name and telephone number of the writer. Writers will be contacted for verification.

No unsigned letters will be published.

Letters should be no longer than 500 words.

Spoke reserves the right to edit any letter for publication.

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Winter is on its way

Earlier this month we saw something that we did not get to see much of last year — snow.

I love the fluffy white stuff because it reminds me that winter is just around the corner. But you will not believe the number of complaints I heard while it was drifting down onto us ... or maybe you will.

I can understand complaints about snow so high that it gets all over your legs and leaves them frozen for half the day.

However, the snow we had was, yes, a little wet, but it did not get in our shoes or pile up on the ground, making us wade through a sea of flakes.

After the months of heat and rain, how come people cannot welcome a little bit of cold weather that made us happy as kids? Did we not wait for the first couple of inches of packing snow to hit the ground so we could



Jennifer Marko

Opinion

build snowmen and snow forts?

How come we cannot see snow in the same way that we used to?

Last winter when we had no snow, it felt like something was missing. And when Christmas came around, and there was still no snow, it felt even worse. I have heard people talking about how they want snow for Christmas Day and that is it. But what about Christmas Eve and the other days of the month?

Snow is something that makes winter feel like winter and not just another rainy October.

Sometimes snow can be nice, you know, the kind that is fluffy and comes down gently ... not the kind that the wind throws against you and makes you feel like you are being pelted by drops of ice.

Now, I have to admit that when it does begin to pile up and make it difficult to get to school, I complain just as much as the next person because no one wants the feeling of snow in their socks or half-way up their legs.

You have to admit, though, that when the bigger flakes come down against the coloured, or even white, Christmas lights it is very pretty.

So until the level of snow reaches the point where the buses are running late, the snow is piled on top of your windshield, or you can feel it going up your pant leg or in your shoe, we should just take the time to appreciate its beauty while we can still feel our limbs.

Internet harassers must be held accountable

A 13-year-old girl takes her own life, and not only is the person who drove her to do it unapologetic, but to this point she has not faced any consequences.

The story of young Megan Meier is a tragic one that left me feeling shocked, appalled and sick to my stomach when I recently read it.

For those of you who are unaware, Megan hung herself in her bedroom on Oct. 16, 2006. After a falling out with a friend, that friend's mother (and others) created a fake MySpace page under the guise of a young boy named Josh.

Josh and Megan hit it off and chatted for over a month before Josh suddenly changed. He began telling Megan he had heard she was mean to her friends, and that the world would be better off without her. He also posted on a message board, saying Megan was fat and a slut. That was the last straw for the fragile teenager who was found in her room later that day.

It would be one thing if Josh actually existed and it was just an unfortunate case of kids being cruel. But to have an adult prey on a child is something totally different and so much more unacceptable.

The perpetrators have not been publicly identified because Megan's parents do not want repercussions for their daughter's former friend. Admirable at best, but if that was my daughter, the names of these people would be plastered everywhere.

Those responsible said they didn't intend for Megan to kill herself. However, 13-year-old girls are fragile and Megan battled ADD and depression. I don't really give a damn what the intentions were. They mentally and emotionally tortured a young girl for no reason at all.

How pathetic and insecure does one have to be (especially an ADULT) to perform such a cold and calculated manipulation of a child?

As far as I'm concerned, this woman could be drawn and quartered and still wouldn't get what she deserves.



Christopher Mills

Opinion

Speaking of which, would you like to know what punishment this woman has received so far? The answer ... none. Megan's parents are seeking charges on harassment but so far authorities have told them there is no legal action they can take.

What is this world coming to when you can drive someone to the point of suicide and not even have your name released by the media?

According to Megan's mother, the woman responsible sent her a letter acknowledging some degree of responsibility, but had the gall to say she felt no guilt or remorse over the situation.

Are you kidding me?

The woman also approached Megan's mother at a store and asked her to stop bringing attention to the issue. How Megan's mom let that woman walk away without at least a hand upside the head is beyond me, but at least her crusade continues.

Lack of Internet legislation be damned, how can our society, our government, and especially we the media, protect people like this? I understand the intent to protect the other young girl, but she was involved too. She willingly and knowingly helped her mother abuse a former friend for some sick pleasure. Underage or not, she deserves no such protection.

I know the Internet is hard to regulate, but that excuse has too long been used as a reason to not address certain issues. If that type of harassment had occurred in person, action would be taken. But apparently nothing can be done now because it's the Internet? Please.

It's time to stop protecting and making it easy for these sick people to prey on the young and the innocent.

Canadian or American, just bring on the talent

In the world of major sporting events, the Grey Cup is Jan Brady and the Super Bowl is Marsha, Marsha, Marsha.

Like a chess club kid inviting a cheerleader to her birthday party, Grey Cup organizers always try to glam up their image by inviting superstar American performers to headline the halftime show.

Two years ago it was the Black Eyed Peas. At this year's Grey Cup, Lenny Kravitz played the part given to Prince and his controversial phallic guitar at February's Super Bowl.

Let the Canadian content protesters wail and gnash their teeth.

Why don't we drag out those tired old chestnuts Celine Dion or Bryan Adams, they'll say. Aren't Blue Rodeo and the Tragically Hip good enough anymore? Do we have such low self-esteem that



Charlotte Prong-Parkhill

Opinion

only a stars-and-stripes performer will do?

Maybe we don't have low self-esteem at all. Maybe the constant fireworks, flag-waving, blue-collar rock and roll complete with legions of dancing girls in cowboy hats that characterizes the Super Bowl show isn't necessary here.

Maybe the Canadian brand of patriotism isn't dependent on who sings at a football game.

I like Lenny Kravitz. I don't care if he's from Timmins or Timbuktu. Canadian culture was amply repre-

sented throughout the four days of Grey Cup festival events, including a pancake breakfast and a performance by the Barenaked Ladies.

As Canadians, we pride ourselves on our multiculturalism. If the halftime show was filled with Asian, Latin and aboriginal performers we'd be patting ourselves on the back and smugly congratulating each other on our open-mindedness.

But somehow, hackles rise when our multiculturalism extends to our American neighbours. This is puzzling. Sure, it's the Canadian Football League. And CFL eggheads will be quick to point out that the CFL has been around longer than the NFL.

But let's face it — football is, and always will be, an American game. So, when an American headlines the show, it shouldn't be a big deal.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Labs are for everyone

As a student at this school I wanted to write to the paper about something that has really been frustrating me about this school: the computer labs.

I think it's great to have access to these computer labs. I sometimes have trouble getting work done at home because I get easily distracted by my PS2, or my roommates, or any of the million distractions I have at my house.

So this is why, on a Friday, the week before I have a project due, I brought lunch and supper to the school, because I planned on working on it until I was done. I know I'm not the only person who utilizes the labs for these very reasons.

But, of course, it was just too good to be true. As I'm writing this letter, I am sitting in a computer lab trying to work on my project, and I keep getting more and more frustrated. There is an entire row of guys in this lab that are using this

lab as their own personal LAN party.

I don't care if people play games on these computers. In fact, I'll probably do it as well at some point during my time at Conestoga.

However, I do not want to hear a play by play of what's going on in your game.

Nor do I want to hear the constant stream of expletives that come out of their mouths, along with the racist, sexist and homophobic comments that are also thrown.

These spaces are supposed to be shared by everyone in the school, so please show some respect for the fact that there are other people in the room with you.

I want to do my work, I don't want to hear about who is "sniping" you and how much of a "fag" they are for doing so.

David Clark

FREE Classified Ads!

Conestoga College students, staff and faculty can sell items \$100 and under by placing an ad in Spoke.

Your **FREE AD** must be for a single item, be 15 words or less and must include the price and your contact information.

Private parties only; no businesses. Ads will run in Spoke as space permits.

Your classified ad e-mail must also include your name, address (including city) and phone number.

Limit of 2 ads per week.

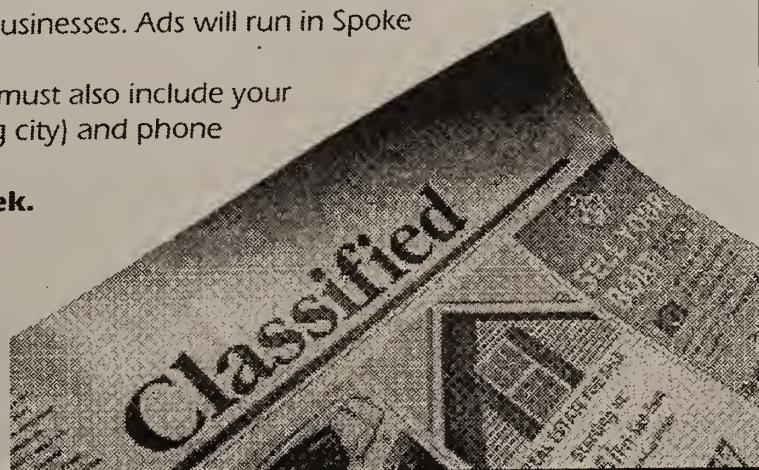
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on.ca

Please type **Classified** ad in the subject line.



Stay safe in other countries – travel smart

Travellers are urged to get a passport and find out about a visa and vaccinations before they leave

By VANESSA BUTLER

Around this time of year everyone wishes they were somewhere hot. Somewhere with nothing but clear blue skies, white sandy beaches and the sound of waves crashing against shorelines.

Before we make these dreams a reality, there are several things to take into consideration prior to taking off.

If you are planning to travel outside of Canada, you will most likely need a passport, and in some instances, a visa. Your passport is the only proof of Canadian citizenship, accepted in all countries. Passport Canada encourages Canadians travelling outside the country to obtain the document. You are also responsible for finding out about visa and vaccination requirements.

Every country has the right to set entry requirements, limit the duration of visits and deny entry to foreigners. You may require visas, entry and exit permits and health certificates when entering a coun-

try. You should ask your air carrier which travel documents you should have before check-in to avoid confusion. For further information about travel documents, contact Foreign Affairs Canada which publishes travel reports about various countries on its website.

Your passport is the only proof of Canadian citizenship accepted in all countries.

It is strongly recommended you buy travel insurance in case you need to cancel your trip due to illness or other specified problems that may occur. As well, international travel insurance is required if you plan to work while abroad.

When packing your bags remember to use luggage sturdy enough to withstand handling.

Label all baggage with your name and the name of a contact person or hotel at your destination

and put your name, address and telephone number inside each piece of luggage.

The Canadian Air Transport Security Authority now assumes full operational responsibility for screening of passengers and their belongings. Security measures at airports are intended to ensure the safety and security of the travelling public. Be sure to have valid photo identification with you for domestic flights and your passport for international flights.

It is illegal for anyone on board an airplane to threaten or interfere with crew members or other passengers. Air carriers have the right to refuse to transport unruly passengers. Smokers must not light up, since the Non-Smokers Health Act bans smoking on all commercial flights operated by Canadian air carriers.

Thousands of Canadians live and work abroad. The majority do successfully, and for many, working overseas is an enriching experience. Whether you plan to find paid employment, pursue volunteer

opportunities or explore new business ventures abroad, you first need to decide what you want and where you want to do it. If you are offered a job overseas it is important to investigate it carefully before you accept. The more preparation and research you do in Canada, the more successful your employment abroad is likely to be. Find out as much as you can about the organization or company offering you a job.

Females of all ages are exploring the planet in growing numbers.

Also learn about your destination. Take time to learn about the political, cultural and economic environment. The working conditions and pace of life may be very different from what you are used to. Making your first contact will be easier if you know how to greet people, how to dress and how to behave in your new work environment.

From young backpackers to experienced businesswomen, females of all ages are exploring the planet in growing numbers. Female travellers are more directly affected by the religious and social beliefs of the countries they visit.

In some countries it is considered improper for a woman to wear a bikini, in others, women should not go out after dark. Whether you are a breastfeeding mother, a busy executive or an older traveller, as a woman you will have unique health concerns to deal with on the road.

What steps can you take to avoid sexual harassment? How can you make your hotel room more secure? Make sure you have adequate health and travel insurance.

For more information about working, flying or travelling abroad, visit the Canadian Transportation Agency, www.cta.gc.ca. Passport Canada, www.ppt.gc.ca or the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, www.catsa.gc.ca.

Microchips help keep your pets safe

By JENNIFER MARKO

You love your pet and do not want to lose it, as it has probably become one of your oldest and dearest friends.

You have no need to worry because your pet probably received a microchip at the time of adoption ... and if not, it is never too late.

Microchipping is not as inhumane as it sounds. In fact, it is not inhumane at all.

Microchips are used to make sure your pet can be returned to you if it ever gets lost or is stolen.

Kathy Innocente, who takes care of fundraising and community relations at the Kitchener-Waterloo Humane Society, said the microchips are tiny transponders with a memory circuit that has a unique number.

"The chip is the size of a grain of rice," said Innocente. "It was developed five to eight years ago and it is implanted between the shoulder blades, under the skin. We don't need to use anesthetic."

Humane societies all over Canada and the United States automatically implant a chip into their animals, said Innocente. That is why the cost of adoption is so high.

Innocente said to chip a pet that does not have one will cost \$65 to \$85 and can be done by a vet.

"The vet I have spoken with has said she has never seen anything bad happen with these chips," she said. "They don't travel, can't be dislodged and last up to 75 years."

But what if your pet runs away or is taken?

"Most shelters have scanners, like the ones at the grocery store, that they use to scan the back of an animal. If they detect a chip they can pull up your information online and get your pet back to you as soon as possible."

Innocente said this is a permanent preventative measure.

"I'm not sure of the Canadian statistics," said Innocente. "but in the U.S. an average of 8,000 animals are returned as a result of the microchips per month."

Third-year business administration – management studies student Nikki Patterson said she has never heard of the microchips.

"I bought my cat from the Humane Society, so it had a microchip already implanted," she said. "I don't think that I would have microchipped him myself, only because he is an indoor cat. I would need to do a lot of research to help me decide on whether or not to microchip him if our living conditions were different."

Ainsley Moir is a 2007 Conestoga business administration graduate and said she has heard a bit about these chips and thinks it is a good idea, assuming there is minimal or no pain for the animal.

However, her pets have not been implanted with a chip.

"My pets don't have a chip since they are indoor cats and my dogs are well trained and loyal," said Moir.



(Photo by Jennifer Marko)

Oreo, a 10-year-old cat, was microchipped two years ago at the Pond Mills Veterinary Clinic in London, Ont.

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Woodworking department hands-on fun

By WEI-LON LEE

The workshop smells of fresh paint and varnish, and as you enter the vast room, you can't help but hear the constant buzzing sounds of whirring saws and sanding machines. Once inside, you soon find there isn't a place to stand or touch which isn't covered in wood dust.

"We have around 170 students from our three (woodworking) programs combined."

Dennis O'Reilly,
program co-ordinator

Such is life inside the Woodworking Centre of Ontario's workshop at Conestoga College.

Laying about are numerous discarded "legs" of tables or chairs which students have been practicing on, perfecting their art of carpentry.

The difference, however, between these young aspiring students and their predecessors of ages past is the technology; unlike carpenters of bygone times, these woodworking students rely mainly on machinery to get the job done.

But don't let the implications of that fool you; each table, chair and cabinet have been carefully measured, designed and tested to meet the required standards of the industry.

"Currently, we have around 170 students from our three programs combined," said Dennis O'Reilly, program co-ordinator.

The Woodworking Centre of Ontario offers Conestoga students three separate programs: woodworking technician, woodworking technology and architectural millwork.

"Both woodworking technology and architectural millwork are co-op programs which require students to complete six academic terms and three work terms in the industry," said O'Reilly.

There are around 40 students on

co-op work terms who are spread out across southwestern Ontario this semester, he said.

"We don't have any students out in the western parts of the country this year, but we've had students who've gone as far as British Columbia in the past," he said, adding that students usually prefer to do their co-op work in Ontario or somewhere closer to their homes.

"Students want to limit their living expenses as much as they can," said O'Reilly. "Living costs can get really high in the west, especially in B.C."

Even though the woodworking department offers three separate programs, there are many overlapping aspects in all of them, especially in the first year.

"Students from all the programs use a lot of the same machinery and processes to get their job done," said O'Reilly.

Students entering their respective programs first get a taste of designing and customizing in the first year, then move into the production phase of their programs.

"It's a pretty hands-on profession," he said.

"Some of the stuff we restore might be over 60, 70 years old."

O'Reilly,

The woodworking centre also hosts a kind of garage sale where projects completed by students are sold at the end of each semester.

"What we usually do is hold an exhibition sale of any leftover projects that haven't been purchased by our students," O'Reilly said. "But we generally encourage our students to buy their own work."

Student projects that aren't purchased are either donated or thrown out, which O'Reilly said is a shame.

In addition to making furniture and cabinets, students also do some restoration work.

"Some of the stuff we restore might be over 60, 70 years old," O'Reilly said.



(Photos by Wei-Lon Lee)

Second-year architectural millwork student Rob Turney, left, prepares to build a cabinet for a class project while first-year student Alannah Hutton displays one of her creations.

Volunteer Opportunity For Students

Student Life is looking for student volunteers to join faculty, administrators and support staff on a College Committee that will develop a student centered environmental design and implementation plan for the Student Life Centre and beyond!

Interested students should drop into the Student Life Office (2A101) for more information

Your commitment would be a minimum of 8-10 hours (2 this semester, 8 next semester)

Share Your Vision



(Photo by Joshua Khan)

Showing respect

Confederation College's Thomas Russell urges respect during an on-campus speech.

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Festival of Trees sparks holiday spirit



Kitchener City Hall was the home of the 18th annual Festival of Trees from Nov. 15 to 22. The festival featured a variety of trees and Christmas decorations that could be viewed and purchased by the public. The event included a poker night, lunch with Santa and a seniors' afternoon tea. All proceeds went to St. Mary's Hospital.

Photos by Christopher Mills

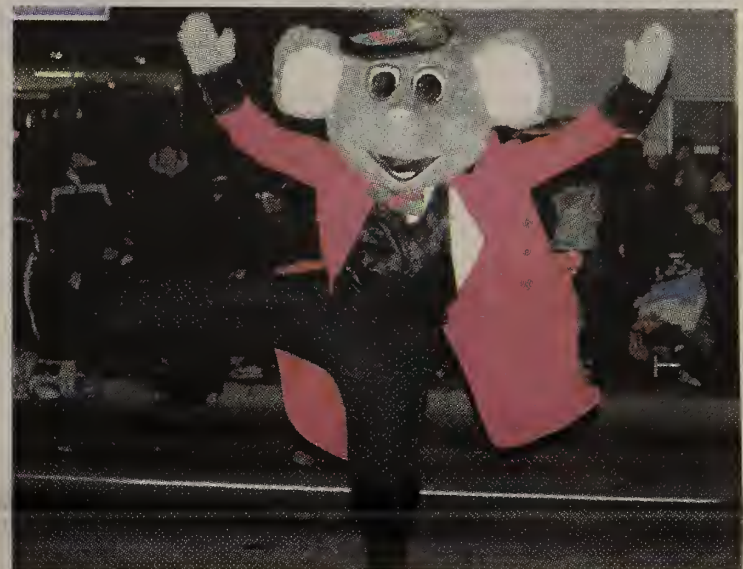


Here comes Santa Claus



(Photos by Jackie Allwood)

It is estimated that 67,000 people attended Cambridge's 35th Santa Claus Parade Nov. 17. The highlight of the evening was the arrival of jolly old St. Nick himself, with Mrs. Claus at his side.





(Photo by Marcia Love)

Ben Ryan, manager of Way Cool Tattoos in Kitchener, designs a tattoo for a customer. Ryan said people are now getting tattoos because of an emotional attachment or for a sentimental reason.

Tattoos have new sentimental value

By MARCIA LOVE

It's something your parents may never approve of, but many young people believe tattoos are well worth the money and effort put into them.

Setting aside the rebellious image which tattoos may have given off in the past, they are now seen in a more artful and meaningful light.

Ben Ryan, manager of Way Cool Tattoos in Kitchener, said most people are now getting tattoos because of an emotional attachment or for a sentimental reason. Someone may choose a certain type of body art as a tribute to a lost loved one, or to show an important aspect of their life.

"We still get a small percentage of people who are sort of collectors of tattoo art," he said, "But most people are getting them maybe as a tribute."

"We still get a small percentage of people who are sort of collectors of tattoo art. But most people are getting them maybe as a tribute."

*Ben Ryan,
tattoo artist*

Tiffany Brown, a second-year management studies student, has a tattoo which she said is a dedication to her family.

"It's a tattoo on my ankle of a heart with six stars that represent my family's birthstones," she said.

Sabrina Kosiorek, a first-year hearing instrument specialist student, said she doesn't have any tattoos and doesn't plan on getting any.



"I can never find something that I could justify," she said.

"Sometimes I want to go get some crazy tattoo done, but I can't picture myself as an 80-year-old with something like that. I would want something that has meaning."

Kosiorek said she understands why a lot of people get tattoos, but said she does not have a reason.

Mirjana Mirkovic, a first-year legal office administration student, said she hopes to someday get some form of body art.

"I love tattoos," she said, "but I want something meaningful."

Mirkovic is from Serbia and said she would like a tattoo to represent her home country.

"My parents won't let me get one right now," she said, "so I'm waiting for their permission."

"I love tattoos, but I want something meaningful."

*Mirjana Mirkovic,
first-year legal office
administration*

Ryan said most of the customers coming into Way Cool Tattoos have a well thought-out idea of the style they want.

"Very (rarely) will customers come in as a sort of a spur-of-the-moment thought to get a tattoo," he said.

Ryan said tattoos are reasonably priced, considering the amount of time and effort put into them, and the fact they will last a lifetime. A small piece of body art may cost about \$100.

"(Tattoos are) a type of art, and art is always popular," he said. "It's how people choose to express themselves."



(Photos by Marcia Love)

Brown said the tattoo cost her \$100, but the price didn't really matter to her.

She said she finds tattoos attractive to a certain extent, as long as they aren't over-the-top.

"I don't like big, crazy ones," Brown said.

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College crest has a lot of history

By JACKIE ALLWOOD

Ever wonder what all the symbols on Conestoga College's crest represent and how the institution got its name?

The college's name actually came from the Conestoga River and valley in Pennsylvania.

This area was also the place where Conestoga wagons originated.

The wagons were built by German farmers in the mid-1700s to the mid-1800s.

Many of the settlers left the valley in Pennsylvania and re-settled here in the Kitchener area.

In 1967, the college's board of governors selected the Conestoga name, which in turn was endorsed by then Minister of Education William G. Davis.

I knew Kitchener's history involved German settlers, which is memorialized by our Oktoberfest parties and the fact the area's name used to be New Berlin.

But these early settlers were also the builders of the Conestoga wagon.

A trip to Doon Heritage Crossroads and a heritage site deep in the bush on the corner of Blair Road and Fountain Street, attests to this.

Armed with the knowledge of the Conestoga wagons I went for an adventure into the bush where I was told there are three wonderfully kept wagons.

I noticed the wagons however, were on private property, so I walked up to the house and knocked but no one answered.

Just outside the door there was a plaque stating the house was actually a City of Cambridge heritage landmark from 1854.

There was a way to get to these wagons eventually, by trekking through the bush, so I took that route.

An article from the Doon Heritage Crossroads archive library stated there is only 70 known Conestoga wagons currently in museums and in private collections, and it hoped more will emerge from barns and sheds throughout the northern states and Ontario.

Once more than 3,000 Conestogas travelled the dirt roads.

An article titled, Conestoga Wagon 1750-1850, Freight Carrier for 100 Years of America's Westward Expansion, claims it was an all-purpose farm wagon and freighter.

It's most important service, however, was hauling freight over

the Appalachian Mountains to the Ohio Valley for the Pennsylvania Dutch.

So how did they get to Kitchener and Cambridge?

The wagon was brought by the Abraham Weber family, who settled here in 1807.

Doon Heritage Crossroads has a Conestoga wagon on display during the warmer weather.

They also have a pair of sides from the wagons brought by the Shantz pioneers around the same time.

Now, one would assume that the wheel on the crest of the college's armorial bearings is symbolic of the Conestoga wagon.

However, it signifies a number of things. In addition to being reminiscent of the Conestoga wagon wheel, it also symbolizes technology, since the wheel is the oldest invention and the technological base for all modern achievement.

In addition, it represents the hex symbol, which is used by the college to signify its link with its Canadian heritage. Hex signs are a form of folk art, thought by some to be of a talismanic nature. Artfully painted hexagonal star-like patterns are a well-known sight on Pennsylvania Dutch barns in and around central Pennsylvania.

Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning was formerly Conestoga College of Applied Arts and Technology.

The "applied arts" part of the college's former name is represented by the phoenix heads rising out of flames. There are three of them, one representing applied arts, one business and one health sciences. Along with technology, these are the four major academic foundations of the college.

The college's armorial bearings, of which the crest is a subsidiary part, was granted approval in 1977, by the Garter King of Arms at the College of Arms in London, England.

The armorial bearings also features symbolism. Technology is represented by the flaming torch, which in the language of heraldry also stands for scientific achievement and development of knowledge. The maple leaves which entwine the torch acknowledge the national identity of the college, as well as the Province of Ontario, and the rainbow with all its colours signifies art.

The dominant colours of the armorial bearings – red, blue and gold – have been adopted as the official college colours.



Clowns for hire

By HIEN DINH

Children giggle quietly as Aunt Dot the Clown starts her magic show. Aunt Dot, who is dressed in a ridiculously showy outfit, grabs the attention of all the kids in the room as they sit down and watch her closely, trying to figure out the magic behind her tricks.

Kate Gregg has been a professional entertainer since 1975.

"I must've done over 5,000 shows," said Gregg, who now lives in Cambridge.

"My husband and I used to perform together as a team in Saskatchewan. He's not so into clowning anymore but I still love it.

"I just totally get involved with the children and we have a good time."

She charges approximately \$100 per hour for her shows, where she performs comedic magic and makes balloon animals.

Gregg is one of many clowns who have been in the business for a long time.

Arlene Penlington, also known as Zoë the Clown, has been in the professional clowning business for over 20 years.

Penlington runs The Chuckle Gang Entertainment Company from Ayr, Ont. but also has a full-time job as a child youth care worker.

She charges around \$130-\$150 per private birthday party and

\$200-\$400 for corporate parties, that range from company Christmas parties to picnics.

"I largely work alone but I have often worked with other performers," she said. "I find that the best part about being a clown is seeing people come together to be unified in laughter and joy."

Penlington specializes in mime and offers balloon animals, magic, juggling and plate spinning. She has had success as a clown but she said it's unfortunate that the (clowning) business isn't booming all year-round.

"I wish I could make a living as a full-time clown," she said, "but the clowning business is mostly seasonal."

Happy Space, an entertainment company, has been running out of Waterloo for three years.

"Right now we have approximately 15 clowns," said Ruth Katz, also known as Q. P. Doll. She has been a professional clown for 14 years and co-owns the company with her sister, Q. T. Pie.

Happy Space charges approximately \$125 per hour (for each entertainer). Discounts are available, depending on how many hours an event is booked for.

They provide face painting, balloon artists, a caricaturist, a musician and a strolling magician. They also provide their location, food, decorations and giveaways.

Clowns generally increase their prices around the holiday season. For more information, call Zoë the Clown at 519-632-8004, Aunt Dot the Clown at 519-653-3387 or Happy Space at 519-885-1850.

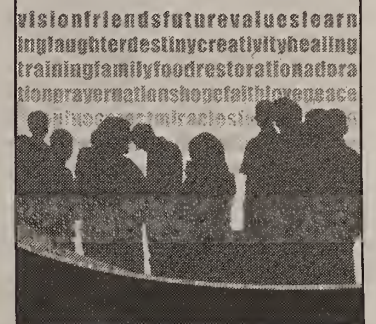
Other clowns in Waterloo Region include: Bobo the Clown, 519-573-3080, Kazoo's, 519-884-6444, Kelly Klowns, 519-648-3581 and Klazz Klown, 519-664-2173.



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COUNSELLOR'S CORNER: College Alcohol Inventory

The following College Alcohol Inventory was developed at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. It might be interesting for you to complete the inventory and then compare your score with the average scores that were recorded at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. I have drunk 5 or more drinks in a row at least once in the last two weeks. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. I have drunk to intoxication at least once in the last two weeks. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. I have drunk alone in the last 3 months. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. I have drunk alcohol daily (at least 5 days of each week) for the last month. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. I have said or done something under the influence of alcohol I regret during the last 3 months. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. I have drunk during the last 3 months so that I could do something that I felt I could not do as easily without alcohol (i.e. talk, relax, be more outgoing). |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. I've experienced a blackout (memory loss) while drinking in the last 3 months. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. I have driven under the influence of alcohol in the last 3 months. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. I have missed school or work due to the effects of alcohol at least once in the last 3 months. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. I have experienced withdrawal (shakes, sweats, flushed faced) after stopping drinking in the last 3 months. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. My drinking has harmed my personal relationships in the last 3 months. |
| True <input type="checkbox"/> | False <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. During the last 3 months, I have often drunk in larger amounts or over a longer period of time than intended. |

Score

Add your scores on questions 1-12 (one point for each True answer). This is your severity score. The range is 0-12. 50% of UWEC students' average score is 2.4. 84% of UWEC students score 5 or below.

If an answer to any question or your total score concerns you, please consider talking to a counsellor at Counselling Services.

"If Alcohol is causing you problems you have a problem with alcohol."

A Message from Counselling Services, 1A103.

'TIS THE
SEASON
TO BUY
PRESENTS



It's that time of year again. Have you started your Christmas shopping yet? If not, you might want to head to the malls as many popular products are starting to disappear from the shelves. With lineups in the stores and parking lots full, you better get going before all the must-haves are gone.

(Photo by Franca Maio)

Conestoga grad publishes first romance-suspense novel — The e-Entity

By HIEN DINH

The holiday season is always an exciting time of the year but for Casey A. Johnson this season is a little more special. The 41-year-old will be releasing her first romance suspense novel, *The e-Entity*, this December.

Johnson graduated from Conestoga College in 1998 with a diploma in journalism print. She then studied at York University where she graduated with a degree in anthropology in 2001.

"(After going to school) I did some travelling in Europe, which (is where a lot of the) destinations I've included in my novel are," she said. "When I got back I started my own communications company called StoneCastle Communications."

Johnson, who lives in Hamilton, Ont., has always had a love for writing.

"I knew that I wanted to write a book at some point (in my life)," she said. "I had about 101 ideas in my head and I couldn't choose one specific (idea) that really jumped out at me."

Johnson's story idea came to her after a personal experience she had with a man through the Internet.

"I was single at the time so I decided I would (wander) around on one of the (online dating) sites to see what it was like and I ended up chatting with a gentleman who lived abroad."

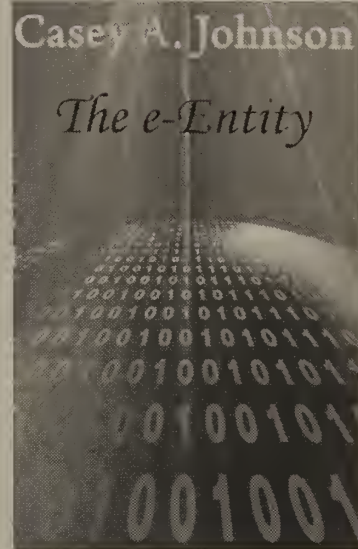
"He really surprised me because he was intelligent and very articulate in his e-mails ... I knew he was well-educated. He was polite and he seemed to have compassion for people in the world. Throughout (our conversations) I knew I would never meet him because he lived too far away but I really enjoyed our intellectual conversations."

"However, within the first month or so (of talking to him) I started noticing inconsistencies (in what he said) and I knew that perhaps he wasn't who he was claiming to be. I started looking into it a little bit (and found) he wasn't in the country he said he was in."



(Internet photo)

Casey A. Johnson, author of *The e-Entity*, has always loved writing.



(Internet photo)

If you're looking for a new read over the Christmas break, try *The e-Entity* by Casey A. Johnson. It comes out in December.

"I never met him but that whole idea about people being devious, deceptive and deceitful over the Internet, I thought, 'Wow, what a great story idea.'"

"I elaborated on it and this is where the fiction came in: I had (the two main characters) in my story actually meet and then, of course, she finds out he's not who he said he was going to be and it becomes this whole government conspiracy, murder, theft, spy novel."

"From (writing) the first word to the end (of the book) took me about a year and a half," she said.

Johnson said her family members are the best individuals she could ever have working for her.

"My mom retired a few years ago and she has now come out of retirement, on her own accord, to become my director of public relations and marketing."

"She goes out and she makes sales calls. She goes to the libraries and drops off copies (of the book) and she's (even) gone to a couple of television stations (to promote the book). She's absolutely ecstatic about it."

Although Johnson is not completely happy with her book, she has put the idea of perfection to bed.

"(The last time I checked) I was on my 30th revision (of the novel). Am I completely happy with it? No, but then again, I don't think I ever will be because I'm striving for perfection and I think that that's almost impossible to acquire."

Johnson hopes to write as many novels as possible depending on how people receive her book.

"I absolutely plan on writing 100 novels if people like my writing style."

Johnson is currently working on a sequel to *The e-Entity* along with a comic strip she hopes to get completed by spring 2008 called *T-Duck & Dillon*.

Travel through the pyramids chasing the dream of treasure

By HOLLY FEATHERSTONE

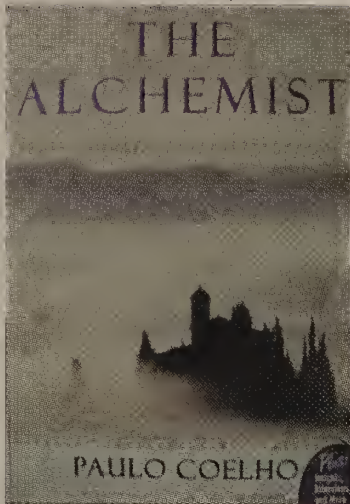
If you're vying for one last portal of inspiration toward fulfilling a heady life's pursuit or far-reaching desire, allow Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist* to further impel you.

At an age where our own navigational instincts and self-discovering impetus is ripening, this beguiling literary journey of a humble yet intrepid shepherd boy forging onward to find his "treasure" is capable of resonating with any reader.

The majority of novels, I've found, subsume the ideas of the readers into one dominant pool of possible inferences, but *The Alchemist* provokes the reader to harness his or her own personal quest and reassess precisely how intently they've devoted to - or aborted - it.

Coelho's manner of writing isn't overtly bombastic, allowing for a leisurely read that is light enough to digest alongside your studies, but potent enough to have you generously pause and reflect and, by my standards, any novel that is capable of having me occasionally withdraw for further contemplation has a profound effect on me.

The theme entails the meandering journey of Santiago, an Andalusian boy once confined to his flock as a shepherd, and his yearning for a transcendental treasure buried amid the Great Pyramids. Along his illusory quest, he is acquainted with the importance of deciphering omens and believing that, whether they pose as gambits or impediments, will ultimately serve to advance his



(Photo by Holly Featherstone)

The Alchemist unveils secrets hidden around every corner. It leaves the reader reflecting not only on the book but on their life.

odyssey. Santiago confronts a gypsy woman, an elusive former king, a crystal merchant, a vagabond Englishman and a charismatic alchemist, all of whom endorse the boy's treasure-mongering mentality. "To realize one's destiny is a person's only obligation" is proposed by the king, who assures that "when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it." The alchemist, whom the boy encountered during a caravan crossing of the desolate African desert, adopts the boy as an apprentice, teaching him to identify portentous occurrences: the unspoken language of the universe.

Though subtly inspired by reli-

gious pilgrimage and even having cited the Islamic Mecca, the novel has an ethereal presence and provocative lesson with which anyone can identify, regardless of age, faith, spirituality or philosophical orientation. Written by a former religious rogue and political dissenter himself, Coelho demonstrates that despite how trivial or stupendous our desires might be, we exist solely to assert on behalf of them, while refusing to surrender.

Although not a recent publication, *The Alchemist* spurred some sensation within the fictional realm this year after the release of the latest paperback edition, which contains supplementary material including an exclusive interview with Coelho and some intriguing discussion questions to further irradiate the novel's thematic crux. The original 1988 version, published in Brazil, was subsequently translated into English in 1998. It has thus acquired international recognition and acclamation from former U.S. president Bill Clinton.

Santiago's assumed treasure in the end is pleasantly surprising, though he, as well as myself, deduced that sometimes, it's not the mere tangible reward that is self-gratifying, but what was also unveiled along the mystified path itself.

The novel imparts to us that despite the constant whims, vagaries and upheavals life thrusts in our direction, one thing remains assured: our identity, because who we are is defined by what, either concrete or immaterial, we oft dream of.

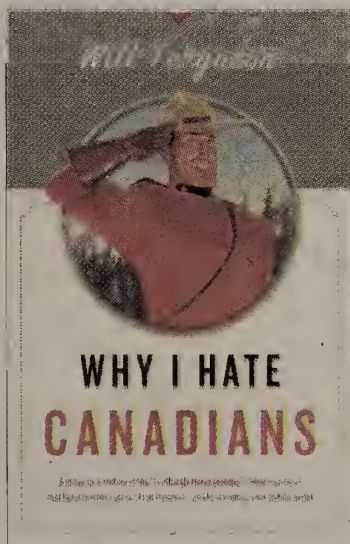
Canadians aren't nice, they're just more polite about being mean

By KAYLA GRANT

During the last few summer days before I started my second year at college I was strolling through a bookstore looking for a quick, easy read. I wanted a book that wouldn't require a lot from me. In short, I wasn't looking for a commitment. What I came across was a book called *Why I Hate Canadians*.

Written by Will Ferguson in 1997, the short novel was celebrating its 10th anniversary. Ferguson penned the book after returning from a year in Japan. He says that his time away from Canada changed how he viewed the country.

The title pulls you in and you find yourself saying such things as, "What's to hate about being Canadian? We're the nice ones." Ferguson squashes that belief in an instant when he says Canadians aren't nice, they're just more polite about being mean. In his chapter called *The day Canada became nice*, Ferguson writes, "A survey of Canadian history from the fun-loving days of the slave trade (usually unacknowledged) to the annihilation of the Beothuk Indians (shame about that) to apartheid (our



(Internet photo)

Author Will Ferguson reflects on the negative points in Canadian culture in his funny non-fiction book, *Why I Hate Canadians*.

reserves and residential schools), internment camps ... I suppose, like any birth, the creation of Canada was bound to be messy and more than a little bloody."

With chapter titles like *Project*

Megapôle: Quebec Is a Joke, Canada Is the Punch Line, God Bless the Queen (and All Her Assorted Inbred, Dysfunctional Offspring) and an entire chapter discussing the superiority of Canadian superheroes. Ferguson effectively uses humour to get across some serious topics. Through his writing style, he asks the reader to face some ugly truths about their country. Ferguson talks candidly about the Somalia scandal, where Canada's Airborne Regiment beat, tortured and killed a 16-year old boy. He also touches on the treatment of natives and the separatist movement.

Why I Hate Canadians is the ideal book for anyone who is looking to get a better understanding of our country or would simply like to read a good book. Throughout the book Ferguson tries to define what being a Canadian means. When reading the book, it feels almost like Canada is a teenager trying to find herself.

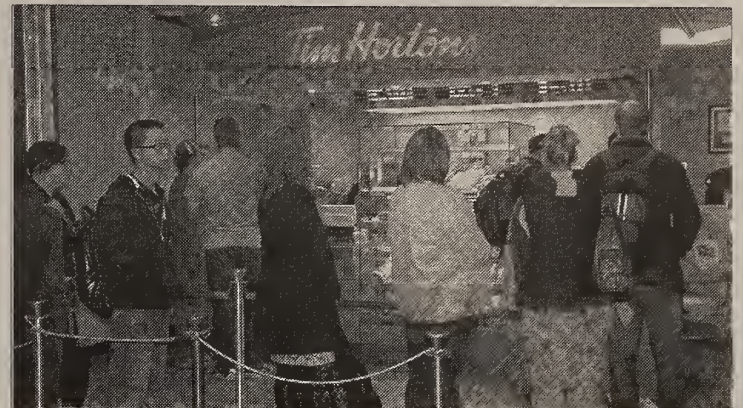
The book will get you thinking. Deeply patriotic and filled with little known facts and dirty dark secrets of Canada's past, *Why I Hate Canadians* is well worth the read. I rate it 4½ out of 5.



(Photo by Wei-Lon Lee)

Ping pong hidden in the recreation centre

Few students know of the ping pong table and arcade games on the second floor of the recreation centre. For Brandon Ruttle, left, and Aaron Werhof, right, this new discovery means they can enjoy a little one-on-one ping pong every once in awhile.



(Photo by Jenn Sprach)

Did You Know...

If you drink one large Tim Hortons coffee a day for one year you will spend \$507.35 and will be waiting in line for an average of 24.3 hours?

Poor Tom Productions Presents

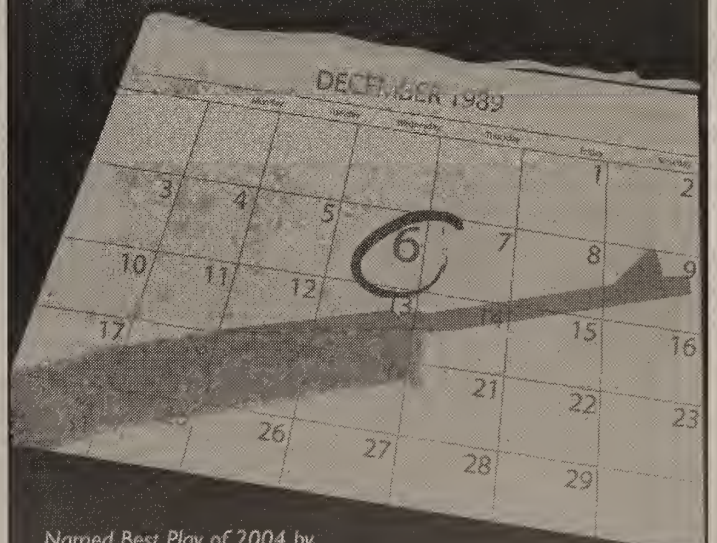
THE ANORAK

By Adam Kelly

Nov. 29 to Dec. 1, 2007, 8pm

Saturday matinée at 2pm

At the Registry Theatre, 122 Frederick St., Kitchener, ON



Named Best Play of 2004 by *The Montreal Gazette*; the *Anorak* is as "courageously complex as theatre comes."

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and **Old Goat Books** 519.880.9595
www.poortomproductions.ca



HOROSCOPE

Week of November 26, 2007



Aries

March 21 - April 19

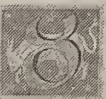
The holidays are a little over a month away, so now is a great time to allow your inner child to shine and really get into the holiday spirit.



Libra

September 23 - October 22

Your indecisive nature will set you back while you are shopping during the holidays. A quick fix would be to make a list and stick to it.



Taurus

April 20 - May 20

At this point in the year, it is a bad time to procrastinate for the holidays. The malls are filling with shoppers, so hurry if you want to beat the huge crowds.



Scorpio

October 23 - November 21

With a little over a month to shop for the holidays, you need to use your investigative personality to find something special for everyone on your list.



Gemini

May 21 - June 21

Using your curious nature will benefit you when you are trying to figure out what to buy for the people on your holiday list.



Sagittarius

November 22 - December 21

Are you ready for the holidays? With the stress of shopping increasing by the day, a gathering with friends is the best way for you to relax before you start your search in the mall again.



Cancer

June 22 - July 22

Shopping for one person on your list at a time will help reduce the overwhelming stress of holiday shopping. Try not to leave it to the last minute.



Capricorn

December 22 - January 19

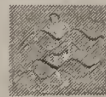
Try to be patient while walking through the busy mall and searching for that hard-to-find gift for someone on your list.



Leo

July 23 - August 22

Your generous nature is more evident around the holidays as you try to find the perfect gift or find a way to give back to the community during the festive season.



Aquarius

January 20 - February 18

You love a good gathering with friends and family. The holidays are the perfect time to host a party for the ones you care about.



Virgo

August 23 - September 22

Being finicky will be helpful to you while you walk through the mall searching for the perfect gift.



Pisces

February 19 - March 20

Try to set a limit before heading out to the mall. It will quell any impulse to buy a gift that is not on your list.



Franca Maio is a second-year journalism student holding fate in the palm of her hand.

Beowulf an epic tale full of action and suspense

By KERRY REED

Based upon an old English poem, Beowulf proves to be anything but old.

The movie is an epic tale that uses the most modern technology and is told through the magic of digitally enhanced live action.

Director Robert Zemeckis and the all-star cast of Anthony Hopkins, Ray Winstone and Angelina Jolie take you back to the age of heroes and monsters.

The tale begins with Hopkins as the mighty king Hrothgar. His kingdom is being attacked by the gigantic boisterous monster Grendel, played by Chrispin Hellion Glover.

Glover's character can't stand the merrymaking the kingdom enjoys at the famous meat hall and every time the hall is ear-splitting noisy, Grendel goes crazy and attacks the kingdom.

Ray Winstone comes to the kingdom's rescue as the hero Beowulf with his small army that includes his trusted friend and comrade Wiglaf, played by Brendan Gleeson.

Beowulf plans an ambush by luring the monster into the meat hall and fights him one on one using nothing but his bare hands.

Grendel gets away and returns to his ruthlessly seductive mother,



(Internet photo)

Ray Winstone plays the title character in Beowulf that opened in theatres on Nov. 16.



played by Angelina Jolie, but dies from his injuries. She is enraged and decides to avenge his death.

Beowulf learns of Grendel's mother through Hrothgar and sets out on a mission to slay the seductress.

After an eventful confrontation Beowulf ends up making a deal with the coy and revengeful Jolie and leaves her alive in a seemingly glori-

ous trade. Beowulf will take over for the heirless king after his immediate death.

This movie is filled with many twists and turns that will keep you on your toes. It goes everywhere from an unloving marriage to secret affairs with unlikely candidates and unorthodox acts to unforeseen foolishness.

Having the movie's action scenes digitally enhanced allows the director to go where live action can not. It is so well done it is sometimes hard to tell if it is a real actor or if it is animated.

This old poem proves it can transcend time while keeping true to its roots and in doing so, immortalizes Beowulf.

College theatre instructor brings The Anorak to city

By JENN SPRACH

School shootings have become more prevalent in recent years, with massacres at Virginia Tech, Dawson College and Columbine, to name a few.

"Hardly a week goes by where you don't hear about a lockdown in a school somewhere," said Tom Leslie, president of Poor Tom Productions, a Kitchener theatre company.

But there is one which stands apart from all the rest in Canada and that is Montreal's L'école Polytechnique in December 1989, where Mark Lepine killed 14 women.

What separates this school shooting from the rest is it was gender specific said Leslie, a part-time theatre instructor at Conestoga College.

In all cases we have the who, what, where, when and how but it always leaves the question of why.

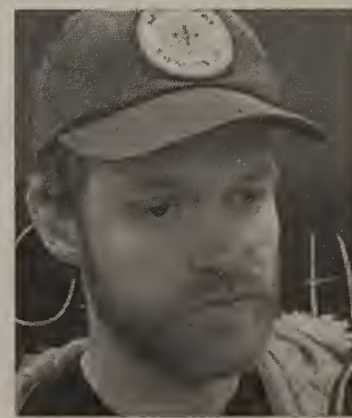
Writer Adam Kelly was living in Montreal and in the same area as Mark Lepine when the school shooting occurred.

Kelly wrote the one-man play, The Anorak, in attempt to understand what goes on inside the heads of these killers.

The term anorak is actually a slang word in Quebec for outsider.

"We're going to see this man bare his soul on stage," said Leslie.

All this production can do is provide more information as to why



(Photo submitted)

Writer Adam Kelly will be performing his one-man play, The Anorak, at The Registry Theatre from Nov. 29 to Dec. 1.

these people are the way they are and let people come to their own conclusions.

All of the plays produced by Poor Tom Productions ask more questions than they answer.

The company is known as the outlaw theatre because of the unusual plays it produces.

"We need to find out why these people (those who are considered outsiders) get pushed away," said Leslie.

People need to be aware this stuff is not going away.

"Everyone needs to see this play," he said, adding, school shootings hit very close to home."

Everyone knows someone

enrolled in school and instances like these affect everybody.

"There's been a lot of buzz about this show and it has a good potential to be our first sold-out show."

Leslie first heard about The Anorak on his way to the college while listening to CBC radio and they were playing scenes from the production.

He became interested in producing the play and tried to track Kelly down to buy the rights to the play.

Kelly wasn't interested in selling the rights but offered to come to Kitchener to put on the play.

"We're going to see this man bare his soul on stage."

Tom Leslie,

part-time theatre instructor at Conestoga College

The Anorak will run from Nov. 29 to Dec. 1, at The Registry Theatre, which holds 150 people, at 122 Frederick St., in Kitchener.

Tickets cost \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door.

Advance tickets can be purchased at Far out Flicks, 519-743-7102, or Old Goat Books, 519-880-9595.

For more information about Poor Tom Productions visit www.poor-tomproductions.ca

Kitchener prepares for Memorial Cup

By CHRISTOPHER MILLS

For the second time in their storied history, the Kitchener Rangers are preparing to host the Memorial Cup.

In an era of bigger, better and more technologically advanced arenas, Kitchener seemed destined to fall short again, after losing both previous bids, in 2002 (Guelph) and 2005 (London).

"It was pretty much a foregone conclusion that it was going to go to a city like Oshawa or Sarnia," Rangers head coach and general manager Peter DeBoer says, describing the team's reaction to hearing they would be the hosts in 2008. "There was a little shock at first, but we felt we had the best presentation and I think the right decision was made."

The national Canadian Hockey League tournament — featuring the winners of the Western, Ontario and Quebec leagues, along with the host team — rotates between the three leagues each year. It brings tremendous exposure to the team and city selected to host it. Last year it was hosted by the Vancouver Giants, who ended up winning the tournament.

"This city deserves to host the cup as much as any city in Canada," DeBoer says, his voice calm yet serious as he makes sure to recognize Kitchener's fans. "They're so passionate. This is a tribute to their loyalty."

Dave Hurford, communications director for Vancouver mayor Sam

Sullivan, says the benefits to hosting the tournament are tremendous.

"It's a great opportunity to promote the city," he says. "There's a lot of media and international hockey scouts. It really becomes a who's who of hockey, and not just junior, but NHL as well. It's also a great chance to promote the region and showcase the city's ability to host a large scale event."

Once the decision was announced earlier this year, Rangers chief operating officer Steve Bienkowski began putting together an organizational committee, headed by retiree John Thompson.

"I've known Steve a long time; since 25 years ago when he was a player and I was the business manager for the Rangers," Thompson says. "He came to me and said 'John, if we get the bid, are you interested in a role?' It took me all of five seconds to say I'd be glad to be involved in any way."

The host committee is comprised of 50 members, including a group of 15 that Thompson refers to as the management team. There are also more than 700 volunteers recruited to help with the event.

"We've adopted as our theme three words: beyond the ordinary," Thompson says. "Our role is to ensure that all the details, the hosting, the organizing, the logistics are done professionally and with enthusiasm, through volunteers. For each one of our tasks we're asking people to make sure we go beyond the ordinary."

Thompson says he's confident his volunteers will do a good job, but that won't be good enough.

"For example, in terms of transportation, what are we going to do to make our drivers and that experience beyond the ordinary?" Thompson asks rhetorically. "One thing we're looking at is providing each driver with a fact sheet on each team in the tournament, so they have key information on each city, as well as that city's hockey stars."

The committee is faced with a tough task. When putting forth a bid, each potential host city must guarantee the CHL at least \$1.8 million in revenues.

"We're optimistic that we can achieve that goal, and even modestly surpass it," Thompson says, confident yet still acknowledging the lofty goal.

Kitchener's size — both in terms of population and arena capacity — puts it at a slight disadvantage over a larger city, like Vancouver.

"In terms of accommodating fans and the media, more people could actually see it (in Vancouver)," Hurford says.

"Vancouver seats 16,000 plus. Last year, they had around 14,000 per game and set attendance records, but they still had empty seats," Thompson says. "Because the Aud only seats about 6,000, it's undergone a million-dollar-plus renovation to add more occupancy. There's now room for about 600-700 more people."

The Rangers borrowed the

money from the city and will pay it back over five years.

One luxury the Rangers do have over a larger city is less competition. Last year, the Giants were playing in the same city as the NHL Canucks, as well as competing with other large city attractions.

"We'll be the big show in town," Thompson says. "Everyone will know that it's Memorial Cup week."

As far as accommodations, Thompson says the committee had to book more than 700 rooms in local hotels to guarantee space for teams, families, CHL officials, NHL personnel and fans.

"Economically, this is going to have a multimillion-dollar impact on the community," Thompson says with excitement. "Hotels, restaurants, revenue at concessions, extra events, everything."

Many events are being planned for the week, with a focus on family and variety.

"One thing we're doing (to involve the community) is an exhibit featuring all 60 CHL teams," Thompson says, a hint of excitement in his voice. "Each team is going to be adopted by a Grade 5 class in Waterloo Region and they'll do a display about their team."

Other festivities include an exhibit from the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto, the Memorial Cup golf tournament to be held at Whistle Bear golf course, a fireworks display and a Road

Breakers ball-hockey tournament for charity.

"There will be seven divisions of four teams, four to a side," Thompson says. "They'll each represent the Memorial Cup teams and they'll play a Memorial Cup-style schedule."

The other big attraction is the annual CHL awards event, to be held at Center in the Square the day before the championship game.

"It's primarily for VIPs and sponsors and they might pay around \$75 per ticket," Thompson says. "But we're looking at using additional seating so that minor hockey teams and avid fans can come and take part at a more modest price."

Thompson says the goal of the committee is to have events that will be of interest to family and children, including interactive events.

"We'll have some from the Hockey Hall of Fame and some that we've purchased ourselves," he says. "Things like shooting the puck in the net or shooting hoops."

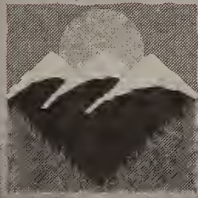
Thompson also says the committee is considering one or two other "major" activities, but that was as far as he would go, saying plans have not been finalized.

"Fans can definitely be excited though," he says.

DeBoer definitely is.

"There are so many passionate people here, it's a great luxury to be hosting the tournament," he says. "We want to put on the best Memorial Cup ever."

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FINALS
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in the Sanctuary at noon

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